

# Praying for Our Leaders

## 1. God wants us to pray for our leaders.

"I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity." 1 Timothy 2:1-2 (NLT)

### a. Our leaders are God's agents for keeping order and restraining evil.

"Make the Master proud of you by being good citizens. Respect the authorities, whatever their level; they are God's emissaries for keeping order." 1 Peter 2:13-14 (MSG)

"Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong."

Romans 13:1-4 (NLT)

### b. We must ask God to help our leaders.

- They need wise counsel. (Proverbs 11:14, 24:5-6)
- They need good staff. (Proverbs 14:35, 25:5, Ecclesiastes 10:5-7)
- They need protection. (Ezra 6:9-10)
- They need courage to carry out justice and restrain evil. (Proverbs 16:12, 29:4)
- They need humility. (Psalm 72:11)
- They need to speak carefully and truthfully. (Proverbs 16:13, 17:7, Psalm 141:3)
- They need accountability. (Psalm 141:5)
- If they are doing wrong they need to repent. (2 Chronicles 33:1-13)

### c. We must show our leaders honor and respect.

"Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good." Titus 3:1(NLT)

"So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience. Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority." Romans 13:5-7 (NLT)

*Note:* We must NOT submit to our leaders if it means disobeying God.

"We must obey God rather than any human authority." Acts 5:29 (NLT)

"O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up." Daniel 3:16-18 (NLT)

### d. We must pray for ourselves.

"It is God's will that by doing good, you might cure the ignorance of the fools who think you're a danger to society. Exercise your freedom by serving God, not by breaking the rules. Treat everyone you meet with dignity. Love your spiritual family. Revere God. Respect the government." 1 Peter 2:15-17 (MSG)

- We need to show respect to our leaders. (Ecclesiastes 10:20, Proverbs 24:21-22)
- We need to think of others more importantly than ourselves. (Philippians 2:2-4)
- We need to live out our faith. (1 Peter 2:15-17, Romans 12:17-21)
- We need protection for our religious freedoms. (2 Thessalonians 3:2)
- We need boldness. (Psalm 119:46, Ephesians 6:19-20)
- We need to get God's perspective on things from the Bible. (Psalm 119:91,105,114)
- We need to stay on mission. (Matthew 28:19-20)

- We need to trust that God is in control. (Psalm 2:1-5, 23:4, Proverbs 21:1)
- If we are doing wrong we need to repent. (Proverbs 28:13, Acts 3:19-20)

## **2. Praying for our leaders is the right thing to do.**

“This makes God happy. This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone.” 1 Timothy 2:3-6 (NLT)

“The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.”

James 5:16 (NLT)

“...keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you.” Luke 11:9 (NLT)

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### Connect Group Discussion Questions:

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's lesson, "Praying for our Leaders" was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?
2. What do the following passages teach us about how Christians should relate to governmental authority?
  - Romans 13:1-7
  - 1 Timothy 2:1-6
  - Titus 3:1
  - 1 Peter 2:15-17

What surprises you from these passages? How do they apply to us?

3. Discuss the following lists of ways we can pray for ourselves and our leaders. Look up the associated Bible references as well. Then spend some time as a group praying for our leaders (President, Senators, Mayors, Governor, School Board, Law Enforcement, etc.)

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- We need protection for our religious freedoms. (2 Thessalonians 3:2)
- We need boldness. (Psalm 119:46, Ephesians 6:19-20)
- We need to spend daily time with God studying His word. (Psalm 119:91,105,114)
- We need to stay on mission. (Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Peter 2:9-12)
- We need to trust that God is in control. (Psalm 2:1-5, 23:4, Proverbs 21:1)
- If we are doing wrong we need to repent. (Proverbs 28:13, Acts 3:19-20)

Can we pray these things even for leaders we don't like? Why? Why not?

Under what circumstances is it right to NOT submit to governmental authorities? (see Acts 5:27-29, Daniel 3:12-18)